

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 06551 101316Z
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S E C R E T TEHRAN 6551

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM

EO 11652: X-GDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, IR, P
SUBJ: AUDIENCE WITH THE SHAH: IRAN-PAKISTAN-INDIA

1. DURING AUDIENCE JULY 9, FOLLOWING HIS TOUR D'HORIZON OF THE SOVIET EXPANSIONISM THROUGHOUT AFRICA, THE RED SEA, AND THE PERSIAN GULF AND HIS DESIGNATION OF AFGHANISTAN AS LOST TO THE SOVIETS, THE SHAH STATED THAT THE PRIMARY NEED WAS TO FIRM UP THE IRAN-PAKISTAN-INDIA RELATIONSHIP. THE PAKISTANI COMPLEX ABOUT INDIA AND PAKISTAN'S INTERNAL DISARRAY MADE THIS DIFFICULT.

2. I STATED THAT, ONCE THE REPROCESSING ISSUE IS PUT ASIDE, WE WANTED TO MOVE AHEAD ON A NUMBER OF MATTERS: RESUMED ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, FOOD AID, SOME MILITARY SALES AND POSSIBLE HELP ON DEBT. DID HE HAVE, I ASKED, ANY FIRM INDICATION OF FRENCH PLANS? HE REPLIED THAT GISCARD OVER A YEAR AGO TOLD HIM FRANCE WANTED A WAY OUT. A RECENT EMISSARY (PONIAOWSKI) HAD SAID THE SAME THING.

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ON HIS PART HE HAD TOLD THE PAKISTANIS MANY TIMES THAT A REPROCESSING PLANT WAS SILLY FOR A 200 MEGAWATT PLANT WHEN A 50,000 MEGAWATT NUCLEAR POWER OUTPUT WAS MINIMAL TO MAKE A REPROCESSING PLANT USEFUL. "WHAT IS THE GOOD OF A COUPLE OF NUCLEAR BOMBS? WOULD THEY DARE USE THEM?" HE SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE THE SAME POINTS TO PAKISTAN EVEN THOUGH THEY RESENTED IRANIAN EFFORTS IN

THIS REGARD.

3. WHEN I ASKED WHETHER PAKISTAN COMPENSATION FOR GIVING UP THE REPROCESSING PLANT MIGHT LIE IN THE FORM OF PURCHASING FRENCH ARMS, HE QUICKLY RESPONDED "I HOPE SO BECAUSE THEIR FORCES NEED THEM" AND HE SAID IRAN WOULD HELP IN THIS RESPECT. HOWEVER, YOU NEVER KNOW, HE SAID, THE PAKISTANIS HAVE THE INDIAN BOGEY AND COULD ACT UNWISELY. HIS NEW AMBASSADOR, FORMER SAVAK CHIEF NASSIRI, HAD TWO CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS: WORK AGAINST REPROCESSING AND FOR CLEMENCY FOR BHUTTO. BHUTTO'S EXECUTION, HE SAID, WOULD FURTHER DESTABILIZE AN ALREADY SHAKY GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: THE SHAH DID NOT IN ANY WAY INDICATE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE BHUTTO MATTER WAS A CONDITION FOR IRAN'S WORKING WITH US ON PAKISTAN'S NEEDS.). REFERRING ONCE AGAIN TO THE PAKISTANI OBSESSION WITH INDIA, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT PAKISTAN'S ABILITY TO TAKE THE LONG VIEW- PARTICULARLY THE FOREIGN OFFICE PRINCIPALS AGHA SHAHI AND SHAH NAWAZ.

4. WHEN I ASKED WHAT OTHER STEPS COULD BE TAKEN TO TIE THE THREE COUNTRIES CLOSER TOGETHER, HE REPLIED THAT A TRANSIT AGREEMENT WOULD BE SO EASY FOR PAKISTAN AS A FIRST STEP. BEYOND THAT, HE REFERRED TO EARLIER PROPOSAL FOR COMMON MARKET AMONG THE THREE COUNTRIES AND EMPHASIZED VALUE OF CLOSER ECONOMIC RELATIONS GENERALLY.

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5. FINALLY, AGAIN IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY, HE SAID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS THE STRENGTH OF GENERAL ZIA. IT WAS KNOWN THAT GENERALS CHISHTI AND IQBAL WERE NOT HAPPY WITH ZIA BUT NOT MUCH ELSE WAS CLEAR.
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